



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/031,084	01/16/2002	Nobushige Arai	2936-0146P	6094
2292	7590	05/04/2004		
BIRCH STEWART KOLASCH & BIRCH			EXAMINER	
PO BOX 747			STINSON, FRANKIE L	
FALLS CHURCH, VA 22040-0747			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			1746	

DATE MAILED: 05/04/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/031,084	ARAI ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	FRANKIE L. STINSON	1746	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 18 March 2004.
 2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.
 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 87-124, 126-136, 138-171 and 173 is/are pending in the application.
 4a) Of the above claim(s) 87-123 and 173 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
 5) Claim(s) 124, 126-136 and 138-168 is/are allowed.
 6) Claim(s) 169-171 is/are rejected.
 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)	4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)	Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____	5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
	6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____

Art Unit: 1746

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. Claims 169-171 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over either Grandprey et al. or Goebel et al. in view of either Lahti or Cole.

Re claim 169, Grandprey and Goebel are cited disclosing a washing machine incorporating a polluted water purifier for collecting pollutants by flocculating the pollutant with a flocculant that differs from the claim only in the recitation of a pH value controller adding an acid. Cole and Lahti are both cited disclosing in a flocculant purifier arrangement, where there is provided a pH controller (see Cole, col. 5, lines 29-59 and Lahti, col. 2, lines 28-44) for controlling the pH of the polluted water by adding an acid. It therefore would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art to modify the device of either Grandprey or Goebel, to include a pH controller as taught by either Cole or Lahti, for the purpose increasing the floc density or size (as is common in the art) or for removing active human involvement in the controlling of the pH (see Grandprey col. 4, line 59-62). As for the pH, please see Lahti col. 6, line 13. Re claims 170 and 171, no patentable distinction is deemed to exist between the pollutant being flocculated, namely an anionic surfactant or the flocculant employed, namely a cationic inorganic flocculant, and the corresponding features in either Goebel or Grandprey (see MPEP 2144.06, "SUBSTITUTING EQUIVALENTS KNOWN FOR THE SAME PURPOSE").

3. Claims 124, 126-136, and 138-168 allowed.

4. Applicant's arguments filed March 18, 2004 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. In regard to the remark that the applied prior art fails to disclose the pH as claimed in claim 169 (amended), please note Lahti col.6, line 13. It is also suggested that the next response cancel claims 87-123 as being drawn to a nonelected invention.

5. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to FRANKIE L. STINSON whose telephone number is (571) 272-1308. The examiner can normally be reached M-F from 5:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. and some Saturdays from 5:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (703) 872-9306.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application should be directed to TECHNOLOGY CENTER 1700 (571) 272-1700.

Any inquiry for missing parts of this Office Action (copies of references, pages, forms etc.), contact the TEAM LEADER Ms. Nicol Scott (571) 272-1045.

fls



FRANKIE L. STINSON
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 1746